

Message Text

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ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 IO-13 DHA-05 /109 R

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-----041448 271028Z /17

R 262121Z OCT 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USINT HAVANA
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LISBON

S E C R E T STATE 256525

E.O. 11652:XGDS - 2

TAGS: XJ, AO, CU, PINR

SUBJECT:ANGOLA INSURGENCY

REF: HAVANA 0293 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING IS ASSESSMENT PREPARED BY INR OF ANGOLAN SECURITY SITUATION, AS REQUESTED REFTTEL.
2. THE ANGOLAN SECURITY SITUATION HAS SHOWN NEITHER SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT NOR SERIOUS DECLINE DURING RECENT MONTHS. WHILE NO DECISIVE MILITARY OUTCOME SEEMS LIKELY,
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UNITA, BY FAR THE STRONGEST OF THE THREE INSURGENT MOVEMENTS, HAS BECOME MORE AGGRESSIVE AND IS ATTEMPTING TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS INTO ANGOLA'S NORTHEASTERN PROVINCES PREVIOUSLY UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

3. UNITA WAS OBVIOUSLY BUOYED BY THE MAY UPRISING AGAINST THE LEADERSHIP OF ANGOLAN PRESIDENT NETO, WHICH BROUGHT

INTO THE OPEN THE WIDESPREAD DISSATISFACTION WITH HIS REGIME AMONG SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE UPRISING WAS QUICKLY THWARTED AND THE REBEL LEADERS CAPTURED, BUT THE BASIC CAUSE OF UNREST REMAINS: THE CONTINUING CIVIL WAR WHICH HAS FRUSTRATED THE REGIME'S ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL SCHEMES. UNITA HAS ALSO ATTRACTED MORE MODERATE

AFRICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN SUPPORT FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF THE ANGOLAN-SUPPORTED INVASION OF ZAIRE LAST SPRING.

4. UNITA CLAIMS TO HAVE ABOUT 12,000 COMBAT TROOPS PLUS AN EQUAL NUMBR PERFORMING SUPPORT FUNCTIONS OR IN TRAINING. THIS FORCE MOVES FREELY WITHIN AN AREA OF SOUTH-EASTERN ANGOLA THAT IS ROUGHLY HALF OF THE COUNTRY'S TERRITORY. IT DOES NOT OCCUPY THE CITIES OR MAJOR TOWNS, WHICH REMAIN IN CUBAN/MPLA HANDS BUT IT DOES DENY CONTROL OF THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE GOVERNMENT FORCES.

5. LAST MONTH ANGOLAN/CUBAN FORCES LAUNCHED A MAJOR BUT INEFFECTIVE OPERATION TO ATTEMPT TO DRIVE THE INSURGENTS FROM THE CENTRAL PROVINCES. NOW THEY HAVE BEGUN A DRIVE TO REGAIN CONTROL OF SEVERAL UNITA-HELD TOWNS ALONG ANGOLA'S SOUTHERN BORDER WITH NAMIBIA.

6. SEVERAL REPORTS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE CUBANS MAY HAVE SENT AN ADDITIONAL 4,000 MEN TO ANGOLA RECENTLY,
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BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO STRONG EVIDENCE OF A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE CUBAN PRESENCE SINCE LAST SPRING, WHEN HAVANA HURRIEDLY REINFORCED ITS CONTINGENT BY 3-4,000 MEN. THE RECENT REPORTS MAY HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY IN-COUNTRY MOVEMENTS RELATED TO THE SOUTHERN OFFENSIVE. CUBA MAY NOW HAVE AT LEAST 15,000 TROOPS AND SEVERAL THOUSAND CIVILIANS IN ANGOLA.

7. ALTHOUGH THE ANGOLAN/CUBAN FORCES ARE FAR MORE HEAVILY ARMED, UNITA'S GUERRILLA TACTICS HAVE ENABLED IT TO SURVIVE LARGE ASSAULTS AND REGAIN ANY LOSSES ONCE THE GOVERNMENT TROOPS WITHDRAW TO THEIR GARRISONS. LITTLE CHANGE IS EXPECTED IN THIS PATTERN.

8. INR REPORT NUMBER 802 OF MAY 1977, WHICH PROVIDES A GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE ANGOLAN SITUATION, IS BEING FORWARDED BY POUCH. VANCE

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